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AH declares emergency, closes boat launches

by CHAD INGRAM
Times Staff

The Township of Algonquin Highlands has declared a state of emergency amid the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak, has closed its public boat launches to all but necessary travel for year-round residents, and has cancelled its summer programming.

While the County of Haliburton and most of its lower-tier townships declared local states of emergency after a provincial emergency declaration on March 17, Algonquin Highlands chose not to at that time. As Mayor Carol Moffatt explained in an email, "Algonquin Highlands had not previously declared an emergency because the provincial state of emergency provided municipalities the same powers as if they had declared themselves, therefore it was unnecessary."

However, last week the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing issued a letter allowing municipalities that had declared emergencies to circulate staff members to different departments to deal with any staffing shortages that may occur.

"This action by the minister allows municipalities to second staff to different departments if and when staffing shortages occur, although we hope this doesn't happen," Moffatt wrote. "Municipal work

see SUMMER page 2



A snowy walk

Amanda Austin walks up a snow covered McKay Street on Wednesday, April 15 in Minden. Austin, who was all smiles because she was celebrating her 20th wedding anniversary with husband Max Ward, said she regularly takes walks, usually twice a day in the neighbourhood. /DARREN LUM Staff

Neighbours Helping Neighbours extends a hand

by DARREN LUM
Times Staff

The Ritchie Falls Road bridge Bonnie Roe stands on offers a kind of symbolism as she talks about her Neighbours Helping Neighbours COVID-19 Support Network and the help the service can provide.

The support network is bridging the divide between people by offering free help throughout Haliburton County in the form of outdoor chores such as cutting and piling wood, making deliveries of mail, picking up takeout food or groceries, and checking in with people by phone or email.

About a month ago, Bonnie and Greg Roe thought of the concept for Neighbours Helping Neighbours, but were primarily focused on just those people on their road.

"I initially said to Greg, 'Let's start with our road. Even though it's early let's be prepared and let's just reach out and see who would like to be involved, who might need some support, who might like to be involved as a volunteer and see where that took us,'" she said.

At first six people committed and now that group has grown to 30 people from an area beyond Ritchie Falls Road and includes four university students who are home right now. She notes several of the volunteers in her area will be focusing their efforts close to their homes.

Neighbours of Roe, Marie and Ray
see NEIGHBOUR page 5

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COVID-19 Coronavirus

Summer events cancelled

from page 1

continues however, it's slower than usual not only because many staff members are working from home, but also because those who aren't working from home are experiencing slower-than-usual workflows due to enhanced protocols for distancing, PPE, hygiene and cleaning of vehicles and equipment."

During a meeting of the township's emergency operations group last week, it was decided that all of Algonquin Highlands' summer programming will be cancelled in light of the COVID-19 crisis. This includes Oxtongue Lake's Canada Day celebration; the Oxtongue Lake Summer Speakers Series; Dorset family movie nights; Dorset Museum Heritage Day; Stanhope Heritage Day; all swimming lessons and aqua-fit classes; the Stanhope soccer league; the Dorset kids' fish derby; the Dorset Arts, Crafts and Antiques Show; and the Dorset community garage sale.

Fall programming and events will be re-evaluated in August. The seasonal opening of the Dorset tower has also been postponed.

The township has also closed its boat

launches to all but necessary travel to permanent residences.

"The province of Ontario has confirmed to Algonquin Highlands that boat launches, like marinas, may only be used where they provide necessary transport to primary residences, and that they may not be used for recreational purposes such as launching of boats, going fishing or canoeing, or any other recreational activity. The township cannot provide any special permission to contravene the provincial order."

The press release goes on to note that violating the order can result in fines from the OPP.

All township facilities, including parks and trails remain closed to the public. Landfills remain open, but are operating on the winter schedule and are accepting household garbage and recycling only. Up to one cubic yard of household waste per vehicle is accepted. A hazardous waste day that had been scheduled for May 16 at the Maple Lake landfill has been rescheduled for Saturday, June 6.

The deadline for the first instalment of 2020 property taxes has been extended to May 29, the due date for the second instalment extended until June 26.



Keep going

Doors decorated by Jamie Allen and residents at Hyland Crest while the facility is on lockdown during the coronavirus pandemic send a positive message to everyone living and working in the facility during a time of global stress and extra precaution.

"The messages to the staff are there to remind them that they are truly appreciated and the residents are super thankful for them," said Allen, who is recreation therapist for the HHHS adult day program, which was suspended due to measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19./Submitted

Privacy concerns limit more specific COVID-19 reporting

by JENN WATT
Editor

The health unit is keeping track of those

who have tested positive for the coronavirus and contacting those they've come in contact with, but they won't be releasing details about which towns or municipalities they live in.

It's already been established that there is

community spread of the virus, said spokesperson Chandra Tremblay in an email to the *Times* last week, and the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit won't be releasing more geographic information to protect the individuals' privacy.

"We have many small communities in our area and we want to protect the privacy of individuals," Tremblay said. "Our staff do case and contact management, and will contact someone if they have been in close contact to a case. We are also seeing community transmission of COVID-19 now, rather than just travel-related cases. This means we all need to assume the virus is in our community and follow all of the public health measures designed to help stop the spread of the virus (staying home, physical distancing, washing hands, cough and sneeze etiquette)."

As of Tuesday, April 21, there were seven confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Haliburton County with one hospitalization and 134 cases in the HKPR District Health Unit. Thirty-three people have died of the virus within the region, none of those was in Haliburton County.

Responding to ongoing reports of residents ignoring orders to self-isolate, on April 14, the health unit issued a "class order," requiring those diagnosed with the virus, who have a probable case or who have been in contact with those who have a confirmed case to self-isolate for two weeks or face a fine of up to \$5,000 per day.

"The health unit has heard from many people that there are others who have returned from travel or been confirmed to have COVID-19 and are seen outside of their home, shopping or visiting friends," said Dr. Lynn Noseworthy, medical officer of health, in a press release. "This order allows the health unit to ensure those people are isolating and not spreading the virus to others in the community."

The order is a measure available to the medical officer of health under the Health Protection and Promotion Act.

Tremblay said the health unit waited to issue the class order in the hopes that people would take the directives from the provincial and federal government seriously, "but the

health unit is continuing to receive complaints about people failing to remain in self-isolation. Without issuing this order, the health unit had no legal recourse in forcing people who have been confirmed to have COVID-19 or come in contact with a confirmed case to comply with self-isolation," she said.

"Going forward, anyone who receives a positive test result will be contacted by the health unit and told about the order. Health unit staff will also be contacting those people daily. If it is found that someone has not complied with the order, the medical officer of health can apply to the court to have that person fined."

Those ordered to self-isolate must not leave home and must not have any visitors except as permitted by the health unit such as when a health-care professional comes to the home for an appointment. Groceries and other necessities should be delivered to the home of the person in self-isolation.

In recent weeks, the paper has received reader questions about whether someone who resides outside of Haliburton County, but who tested positive while in Haliburton County would be counted as one of this county's positive cases.

Tremblay said in that case – someone residing elsewhere, testing positive while in the county – the person would not be counted as a positive case for Haliburton County. She said the health unit for the region in which that person resides would be responsible for doing the follow-up steps.

"If the person tests positive, their home health unit is sent the test results, and staff from that health unit would be involved in the case and contact management for that case," she said. "Those staff would be in touch with anyone who could have been exposed to that positive case during the communicable time."

Last week, the health unit expanded the amount of information available to the public regarding COVID-19 cases including whether the cases are part of an outbreak or in the community and data on age ranges. It does not include a break-down of each individual case by age or how the person is thought to have acquired the virus. A new report is posted each day.

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Scott urges residents to stay the course

by CHAD INGRAM
Times Staff

Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock MPP and Ontario Infrastructure Minister Laurie Scott says she's cautiously optimistic that the province might see the peak of the coronavirus curve in the not-too-distant future, but is emphasizing it's important for residents to stay the course with safety protocols.

"We can't take our foot off the pedal right at the moment," Scott said, encouraging residents to continue practising self-isolation and social distancing.

The provincial government declared a state of emergency over the COVID-19 outbreak on March 17, and has since shut down large portions of the economy, releasing a list of essential businesses that are permitted to continue operations in late March, and then refining that list in early April.

"I know it's very hurtful for a lot of businesses," Scott said.

Many businesses in Haliburton County have closed their doors temporarily, or are operating in modified fashion, such as restaurants and breweries offering delivery options. Some business owners have indicated they are uncertain whether they will ever be able to open their doors again.

The province is offering a number of measures to help ease the burden for business owners. The Regional Opportunities Investment Tax Credit will provide \$45,000 in tax savings for businesses that are building, renovating or acquiring qualifying commercial and industrial buildings. The provincial government has announced \$1.9 billion in relief on WSIB premiums, with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board allowing employers to defer premium payments for up to six months. In addition, no interest will be accrued on outstanding WSIB payments during that six-month period. The Employer Health Tax exemption will be doubled for 2020, for businesses with \$1 million in payroll, as opposed to \$490,000. According to the government, this means some 57,000 private sector employers will pay less health tax for 2020, including about 30,000 who would be exempt for the



Infrastructure Minister and local MPP Laurie Scott said most of her time is taken up handling information regarding health care and hospital issues during the COVID-19 pandemic. /Photo supplied

year. The province is also offering some \$6 billion in tax deferrals for certain provincially administered taxes from now until Aug. 31, and businesses will not incur interest or penalties during that deferral period. According to the provincial government, that measure should free up about \$6 billion in cash flow for some 100,000 businesses.

Scott noted that these measures complement a number of aid initiatives from the federal government, including the interest- and penalty-free deferral of owing corporate taxes. The federal government has also created a wage subsidy for employers covering 75 per cent of wages on the first \$58,700 of an employee's wage, and has a number of other measures

to assist businesses, including an emergency loan program.

More information on the province's COVID-19 assistance resources for businesses can be found at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-support-businesses>.

Resources for students and parents can be found at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-support-students-and-parents>, and additional resources can be found at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-support-people>.

As for what it's like to be in office during the pandemic, Scott told the *Times* MPPs are dealing with huge volumes of information each day, and said about 75 per cent of her day consists of dealing with health care and hospital issues, getting updated by medical professionals, reviewing modelling of the progress of the virus, being briefed on logistics of mask shipments, etc. Emergency decisions are being made against this deluge of ever-changing information.

"You just can't really look at the whole picture, because there's no time," said Scott, who was a nurse before being elected to parliament, and compared the stressful situation to dealing with a patient in an emergency room. "I've got to get the heart beating first, and then figure out why he's here without his heart beating."

Scott noted that emergency measures and preparedness plans have been put into effect at hospitals throughout the province, including Haliburton Highlands Health Services. "We didn't see that surge come in, but we have to be prepared," Scott said.

At press time, there were seven confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Haliburton County, with one hospitalization.

Scott remains positive that real progress is being made, and that could lead to discussions about how to go about reopening the economy.

"Every day, I feel like we're getting in better shape," she said.

In the meantime, Scott is encouraging residents to continue to be persistent with self-isolation, social distancing and sanitization practices.

"Wash your hands, wash your hands, wash your hands," she said.

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DISCLAIMER

The information provided on this page is considered current and valid as of April 17, 2020.

While the Township of Minden Hills works diligently to provide the public with the most current information regarding service provisions and reductions during the COVID-19 pandemic, we are aware that, due to the rapidly evolving nature of the outbreak, information can, and may, change on a daily basis. The public is strongly encouraged to refer to our website at www.minden hills.ca for current and up-to-date information. Anyone unable to access the website can call 705-286-1260 or email admin@minden hills.ca for assistance.

EARTH DAY
•CA

EARTH DAY

Earth Day 2020 is April 22nd

In view of the current global health situation, outdoor gatherings and activities are prohibited, however, the Township of Minden Hills believes it is still possible to celebrate Earth Day from home!

A few simple ideas to organize environmental activities at home, alone, or with your family could include; Reducing food waste, Lowering your thermostat, Replacing your light bulbs with low-energy light bulbs, remember the 3 R's (Reduce, Reuse & Recycle), going for a walk or bicycle ride, or start growing seeds for your own vegetable garden... The list is endless.

Let's change our habits for a brighter future, on Earth Day and every day.

Visit www.earthday.ca for more information.

TOWNSHIP SERVICE PROVISION REDUCTIONS

A reminder that all Township facilities remain closed to the public, until further notice. Administrative call answering services will remain available between the hours of 8:30 AM and 4:30 PM Monday to Friday, 705-286-1260 listen carefully to the full message and follow the message prompts or admin@minden hills.ca.

Please provide your name, contact information (phone and/or email) and a clear and brief message regarding the reason for your call.

The public can be assured that essential services will be maintained as much as possible.

We are asking the public to restrict inquiries to Township priority requests only and please understand that it may take longer to reply to messages as Staff handle increased phone and email inquiries.

We are also asking the public for their patience during this time and to observe our request to contact the Township for municipal related inquiries by the following methods only:

Telephone: 705-286-1260 listen carefully to the full message and follow the message prompts

Email: admin@minden hills.ca

Please do not call or email the various Departments or their related extensions or submit inquiries through the Minden Hills website Contact Us form.

If you are aware of anyone who is not adhering to the Government's order which prohibits organized public events and social gatherings of more than five (5) people, or who are not practicing appropriate physical distancing; you are encouraged to contact your local police department or the OPP at 1-888-310-1122 or online by visiting opp.ca/reporting.

For a complete list of all Township service provision reductions, please go to: www.minden hills.ca/covid-19-information/

MEETINGS

All Council, Committee of the Whole, Public, Advisory Committee and Local Board regularly scheduled meetings have been suspended until further notice.

BUILDING PERMITS

The Building, Bylaw and Planning Departments are accepting electronic applications only.

Until the Provincial mandate has been lifted, only projects deemed essential by the Province of Ontario will be issued permits. Submit your permit application to admin@minden hills.ca.



LANDFILL REMINDER

Summer hours at Waste Sites begin May 1, 2020. A reminder: please do not attend waste sites until you have accumulated 3 bags of household garbage.

HELP REDUCE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

TAKE STEPS TO REDUCE THE SPREAD OF THE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19):



Follow the advice of your local public health authority.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.



Try not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth.



Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



Cough and sneeze into your sleeve and not your hands.



Stay home as much as possible and if you need to leave the house practice physical distancing (approximately 2 m).

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms of COVID-19 may be very mild or more serious and may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to the virus.



FEVER
(greater or equal to 38 °C)



COUGH



DIFFICULTY BREATHING

IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS



Isolate at home to avoid spreading illness to others.



Avoid visits with older adults, or those with medical conditions. They are at higher risk of developing serious illness.



Call ahead before you visit a health care professional or call your local public health authority.



If your symptoms get worse, contact your health care provider or public health authority right away and follow their instructions.

FOR INFORMATION ON COVID-19:

1-833-784-4397

canada.ca/coronavirus



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Canada

Neighbour initiative grows to include county

from page 1

Siebner appreciate the sentiment behind Neighbours Helping Neighbours, which has already led to a series of thoughtful actions they won't soon forget.

There was an Easter gift left on their deck from the Roes, who delivered an Easter bouquet of leafy branches decorated with colourful eggs and chocolates, and then there was a phone call from their neighbours to check in, leaving them smiling long after.

The Siebners said they were moved to tears by the Easter gift and became inspired to make a turkey dinner and deliver it to family and friends.

"Our hearts are full and stress levels lowered by having neighbours surprise us with good deeds, and encouraging us to do the same. Together neighbourhoods can truly make a difference during difficult times, believe us, we know!" Marie wrote in an email.

The initiative is important because when everybody looks out for each other, no one is alone during the health crisis, Roe said.

"Most of us are couples and we haven't needed that support, but I also thought what if one of us ... got ill and we were quarantined? We don't have children at all ... we have lots of friends nearby and I said, 'You know, we might just be able to pick up something for people when we got to town,'" she said.

A neighbour of hers, Steve Brand, owner and founder of TekRider of Kinmount, recently made the necessary modifications at his manufacturing facility to be able to produce personal protection equipment for the area. Brand serves as an example of the collaborative spirit that is alive and well in her neighbourhood, she said.

If there is any perceived overlap with other volunteering groups or services such as Haliburton Caremongers, Roe said it's not on purpose. The main thing, she said, is the collaboration that is at work now.

"I posted on their [Facebook] page [Haliburton



Bonnie Roe, seen here on the Ritchie Falls Road bridge, is helping connect people in Haliburton County one at a time with her volunteer community service Neighbours Helping Neighbours. For further information and/or support email: bonnieroe08@gmail.com or call 705-286-2414./DARREN LUM Staff

Caremongers] when they began and we continue to share information and stay connected. Our group of 30 volunteers could be a resource to them as well. I see us all working together for the common good as the need for a variety of supports has truly just begun," she wrote in an email.

She was not surprised that so many people were willing to step up to help.

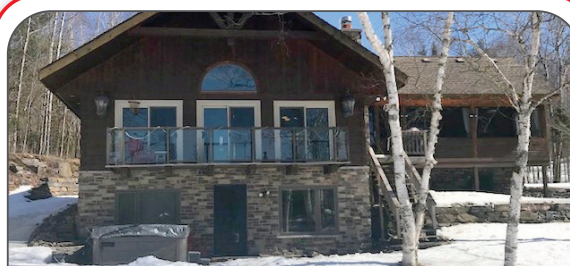
"It's an amazing place to live. I think it says that people want to help however they can and those who have free time now probably have more time to volunteer than they might have if they were holding down a job so I think it's a win-win situation," she said.

For further information and/or support email bonnieroe08@gmail.com or call 705-286-2414.

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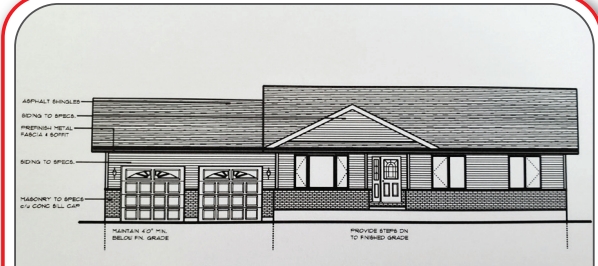
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Connection

TO SAY THAT it's been a rough month would be a drastic understatement.

Mid-March seems like it was six months ago, the cabin feverish effects of self-isolation are beginning to set in for many of us, and our strange new circumstance has meant the adoption of altered routines. For example, along with my morning coffee, I like to stand on the deck and scream, "Why, God, why have you forsaken us?!" into the crisp, April air.

In the past week or two, most summer programming and events, from small ones to the large, hallmark festivals of Haliburton County, have been cancelled. Summertime as we know it in the Haliburton Highlands is effectively canned for this year, and, to deploy some advanced vernacular, that sucks big time.

However, amid this deflated backdrop, there was some good news for the county earlier this week, and it has nothing to do with COVID-19, which quite frankly is super refreshing for me after writing news about COVID-19 for a month straight.

The good news is that the Eastern Ontario Regional Network is releasing the first request for proposals for its massive cell gap project. That's the \$213-million project that will see the construction of new communications towers throughout this region of the province, with the goal of essentially filling all existing gaps when it comes to mobile, broadband, high-speed internet. According to EORN, which is owned by the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus, 40 per cent of the area it serves does not have speeds sufficient enough to stream high-definition video, and 20 per cent does not have access to standard definition

video, typical mobile app use or video app calling. Ten per cent doesn't even have voice-calling service. None of these figures will come as a surprise for some residents of Haliburton County, where service in some areas can still be slow, slim or nil.

The last month has likely underscored the county's poor connectivity for many residents. While many of us have been expected to work from home during the crisis, that may be easier said than done for some depending on their level of internet connectivity. In general, the county's spotty connectivity hampers its economic development in terms of business attraction, and reliable mobile internet is also necessary for the community's safety. Then there's the convenience of being able to use modern digital communication

tools. Congratulations to anyone who had stocks in teleconferencing platform Zoom before the pandemic struck, by the way.

The RFP will be on the market for four months, it's expected review of the submissions will take about equivalent time, and it's hoped that construction will commence in early 2021. The project will take three to four years to complete, and while that may seem too far away for some, remember we're talking about a project that is massive in scope and technical complexity, and which involves multiple private and public sector partners, including all three levels of government.

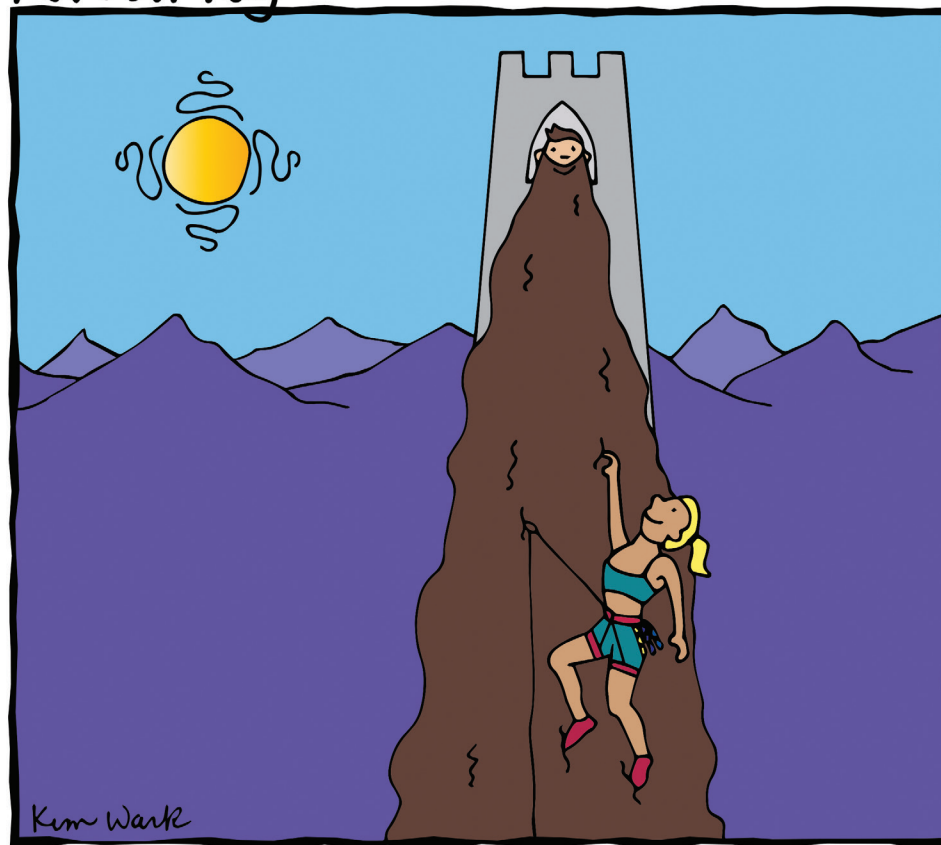
Hopefully the wait will be well worth it, and the next time there's a global pandemic, we'll all be better equipped to work from home.

Just kidding. I hope.



CHAD INGRAM
Reporter

Kwarky



Kim Wark

Slingshots revisited

MOST PEOPLE DO not give slingshots much credit for anything these days, but frankly, they are the only reason most little kids know the letter Y.

Despite this, adults tend to disregard the slingshot as the educational tool it was meant to be. But, believe me, they are exactly that. A slingshot teaches kids and adults so many things. The most important of these is keeping your thumb out of the way.

Keeping your thumb out of the way is one of those critical life skills that's truly underappreciated until you learn how to use a hammer. Then, you're happy you have it.

So, I'll repeat this for those who have lived a sheltered life and have never shot a slingshot – when you shoot one, keep your thumb out of the way. To be clear, I'm referring to the thumb on your shooting hand. It needs to be tucked out of the line of fire when you draw the band and pouch back, and also when you release them. If you don't, several things will immediately happen. And none of them are particularly good.

First, you will regret you ever owned a slingshot. Then, you will reveal your position to anyone within five kilometres. It will also quickly occur to you that you are never again going to be truly proficient at hitchhiking again. And, after the event, you will also never experience the joy that comes from giving someone two thumbs up. Plus, you will be horrible at texting. Worst of all, photos of you crying and sucking your thumb will probably go viral.

As in everything, there is also a positive side to all this too. For instance, there is

no better way to create a new and exciting string of curse words – which has become something of a lost art since naval conscription ended. Also, after hitting your thumb just once, you will never take them for granted again.

The best thing, however, is that the outdoorsman possessing this tidbit of knowledge about slingshots can use it to great advantage and in life-threatening situations.

Here's a fine example. Let's say a bear visits your campsite in the middle of the night and you have a slingshot. What can you do with a mere slingshot against a marauding bear, you ask?

Well, if you keep your wits about you, plenty.

First, you pick up your slingshot and you load it with a ball bearing. Then you draw back. And here's the important part. Just before you release, stick your thumb up in the line of fire.

Immediately after that, the bear will run off because they hate startling, loud noises and don't like to be cursed at in new and creative ways either. Also, you will simultaneously alert a rescue party since anyone within five kilometres of your campsite will come over to tell you to shut up.

On the off chance the bear doesn't leave, however, being mauled suddenly won't feel so bad. So it's a win-win.

I write about slingshots more frequently than most because I truly believe this primitive hunting tool has shaped our evolution. It's just a theory but I happen to believe that, if not for the slingshot, we would have probably evolved with four or more opposable thumbs.

Turns out we just have two, which I think is better. Can I get a thumbs up?



STEVE GALEA
Beyond 35

IN OTHER WORDS

Columns and Letters to the Editor

Still standing and grinning

FINDING A LAUGH in these grim days of disease and isolation is as difficult as trying to light a candle in a snowstorm. I mean, even if a comedian thinks of something funny in the current situation, it's probably inappropriate to say it out loud.

So here I am scrolling through the nightly TV doomsday reports when I stumble into a barrel of laughs. On the CBC, of all places.

The CBC isn't exactly known as the fun channel, but there they are, guffawing faces on a 30-minute show called *Still Standing*.

The laughter is generated by Jonny Harris, a Newfoundlander comedian with a bedhead hairdo and a mischievously goofy look. (He also plays Constable George Crabtree on the television series *Murdoch Mysteries*.)



JIM POLING SR.

From Shaman's Rock

"The population here is not even a fraction of what it was back in the '60s," he chirps in an episode from Bell Island, in Newfoundland's Conception Bay.

"A decline in population . . . you don't expect that in a place called Conception Bay, right?"

Then he gives the audience that devilish grin and adds: "Dwindling population, I mean, that might be the case over in Contraception Bay . . ."

Still Standing is a hybrid comedy/reality show premiered on CBC in the summer of 2015. It has Harris visiting small Canadian towns that have seen

better times. He gets to know the people, their struggles and how they are overcoming them, then gathers them together for a stand-up comedy performance that has them laughing at themselves.

In an episode from Schreiber, Ontario last fall he explored the town's Italian heritage – making Italian sausages and talking about the Filanes Falcons Junior B hockey team, named for the Filane-Figliomeni business family that is involved in everything from restaurants to sports clothing to entertainment.

"I thought there was a bunch of kids on the team named Owen," Harris says during the stand-up part of the Schreiber show. That was because the coach told him that "early in the season the team was 0 'n 4, then later on 0 'n 10 and at the end 0 'n 28."

"I think it's hard for Italian-Canadian kids to play hockey 'cause your parents keep taking your hockey sticks to prop up tomato plants," he jokes.

The towns Harris visits are all small, tight-knit communities that you might say have seen better days, although *Still Standing* highlights how the residents are fighting back and living good lives. They are towns where a main industry has left, businesses have closed and young people have moved to big cities to find work.

Schreiber for instance once was a bustling railway town, a Canadian Pacific Railway divisional point 190 kilometres east of Thunder Bay. Railway jobs declined and a mine that provided significant employment closed.

Joking about the towns and their people before a live audience of residents can be a bit tricky.

"It's got to be a little bit saucy and cheeky," Harris has said about the stand-up comedy part of the show in which he singles out individuals, the community's difficulties and how it has responded to them. "But it also has to be respectful. I'm not there to make anyone feel uncomfortable."

He has found that folks are "not overly sensitive, and are just up for the laugh."

He knows the importance of humour to small, struggling towns. He comes from Pouch Cove (pronounced Pooch) a short drive north of St. John's. It was founded as a fishing and mixed farming community but as fishing declined became more a bedroom community for the Newfoundland capital.

Viewing *Still Standing* can leave you nostalgic, even sad. It hurts to see so many small towns where prosperity left to live in another place.

But Harris's light-hearted antics bring out what's really important about these places: the good-hearted people and how they make the best lives for themselves, their families and their neighbours.

A bonus of the show are the gorgeous landscapes and histories seldom-heard about places scattered from one Canadian coast to another. It gives you a deeper sense of our country and its people.

When each show closes, often with Harris pretending to talk with his mom back home, you get a nice warm feeling about being a Canadian.

letters to the editor

Earth Day 50!

To the Editor,

Today marks the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. Maybe you were involved with Earth Day No. 1 in 1970, or on April 22 during the intervening years.

Would you like to participate online this year if you have internet access? Well, you can. Simply search: "Earth Day 2020: Towards a Green and Healthy Recovery." You will be directed to a site via Eventbrite. You will be asked to register at no charge. This evening, you will be able to view the event through YouTube from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

As people all over the earth experience the present virus pandemic, we see the most vulnerable among us suffering the most. As we already know, this is also the case for the climate crisis which continues to present a greater overall threat to planetary life. For those of us primarily in the west, who have the luxury of practicing social distancing and have access to food, water, and shelter, we have shown that we can change our behaviour. Our habitual and rather unconscious habits of mindless consumerism, travel, and investment, which levy a toll on those we may never see, are not essential to our lives.

Those of us who enjoy the luxury of the acclaimed western lifestyle, know that we do so at the cost to other human beings less fortunate, and to all other life with whom we share this amazing planet. Let this Earth Day mark our collective efforts to take the road less travelled, and renew our relationship with each other and with all other life. This essential shift can embody the silver lining within the dark cloud of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Marine biologist Rachel Carson, in writing her now famous book *Silent Spring* (1962), alerted the world to the environmental impacts caused

by the increasing and indiscriminate use of synthetic herbicides and pesticides. Her courageous work helped to shape a growing environmental consciousness, and although she passed away in 1964, she clearly helped to set the stage for Earth Day on April 22, 1970.

What would Rachel Carson say to us if she were still alive today? Here are a few of her statements which are just as prescient and powerful as they were all those decades ago:

"Why should we tolerate a diet of weak poisons, a home in insipid surroundings, a circle of acquaintances who are not quite our enemies, the noise of motors with just enough relief to prevent insanity? Who would want to live in a world which is just not quite fatal?"

"In nature nothing exists alone."

"But man is a part of nature, and his war against nature is inevitably a war against himself."

"The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders and realities of the universe about us the less taste we shall have for the destruction of our race. Wonder and humility are wholesome emotions, and they do not exist side by side with a lust for destruction."

"The human race is challenged more than ever before to demonstrate our mastery, not over nature but of ourselves."

Let's let the inspirational Jane Goodall have the final word on living more consciously and mindfully.

"You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make."

**John Gibb
Minden**

Algonquin Highlands closes boat launches

DORSET NEWS

Lee Ross

burgesslt@me.com

The Township of Algonquin Highlands recently put up signs at all boat launches that read: Boat Launch Closed. Under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, all outdoor recreational amenities are closed. To report violations contact the OPP at 1-888-310-1122. This is an order that has been put in place by the Ontario Government, not the local communities. Fines have already been given out for people not social distancing and they will continue to be given out as long as we're not doing what we've been told. Here's hoping this will be a thing of the past come summer, but if we don't all do our part, it could continue for quite a while.

Happy birthday to Jude Love, Teresa

Drost, Ian Girard, Dale Webb and Rick Keul. Happy anniversary to Jack and Judy Lilliman. For birthdays and submissions please send them to burgesslt@me.com.



Staff pick - April

Staff member Jaime Abbs recommends:

***The Cuckoo's Calling* by Robert Galbraith**

Cormoran Strike, an ex-military operative turned private detective, is down on his luck. After losing his leg to a landmine in Afghanistan, he's barely scraping by. Then, John Bristow, wealthy lawyer and brother to the recently and tragically deceased legendary supermodel Lula "Cuckoo" Landry, plunges Strike into a case more twisted than he could ever imagine. Strike, with the help of his brilliant new secretary Robin Ellacott, must use his razor-sharp skills to see past a glittery curtain of

fame, and to catch a killer that no one would have ever expected.

Jaime A. Says: Galbraith's skills for subtle subplotting, backstory and world-building are legendary, and he does not disappoint with this novel. I enjoyed the quick pace, gritty wit, and darkly humorous tone, and the characters "popped" right out of the pages.

Rating: 10 out of 10



Retired health-care workers return to front line

by SUE TIFFIN
Times Staff

After she graduated as a nurse in 1971, Jeanette Gibbons spent 15 years working in a neonatal intensive care unit at a hospital in Hamilton before moving to Haliburton County in 1986 to run a resort on Little Hawk Lake with her husband.

The life change offered a break from the intense and emotional atmosphere of the NICU, but a few years later, Gibbons found herself donning scrubs again when she returned to nursing, this time at the Minden hospital.

"It was like learning all over again," she said of the experience. "I had concentrated my career on pediatrics and infant care, and neonatal, and so here all of a sudden I was in an emergency department with adults and traumas and heart attacks and I was so used to premature babies for the last 15 years, and these small little quantities of medications and volumes of IV and so on, it was a learning experience."

Besides a difference in patients she was seeing, Gibbons was also experiencing rural health care.

"We did everything for ourselves," she said. "I'd had all the luxuries of throwaway equipment, you know, you'd use it once and throw it away, and here we had to sterilize things ourselves and package things ourselves. It was just a really different way of nursing, apart from a big hospital."

The experience was one that she cherished, especially the relationships between staff, many she held onto even after retiring from the profession in 2012.

"It was such a close camaraderie, it definitely had its benefits, there was no question," she said.

Because of the time lapsed, Gibbons didn't have an up-to-date nursing licence when the call came for health-care workers to re-enter the field as the spread of coronavirus was anticipated to surge in Ontario hospitals. She tried to find a way in which she could help, including attempting to get in touch with Telehealth, when a former colleague noted that Haliburton Highlands Health Services was looking for people to act as screeners – questioning and observing patients as they enter the hospital to assess possible coronavirus infection.

"You always have what you know," said Gibbons. "It's been part of your life for 40 years, it's always there in your head, right?"

Gibbons is one of more than 40 people: nurses, personal support workers, housekeeping, maintenance, non-clinical screeners and observers: a position that functions as a basic safety one-to-one support for patients or residents, to be hired or re-hired by HHHS to act as local support alongside the front line health-care team.

"We are looking to fill positions immediately," Stephanie MacLaren, VP, community programs, Haliburton Highlands Health Service, told the *Times*. "We have increased our screening practices, and are working towards being able to maintain separation in our staff teams between acute/emergency department and long-term care – and across both our Haliburton and Minden sites. This requires up-staffing in clinical or direct care areas as well as support services (housekeeping, maintenance etc.). We have created a new acute care unit in our Minden facility where there previously was none. The demand is great. We have expanded hours for any existing staff that are able to take on additional shifts and have outreached to the community for health-care workers, screeners, and observers to work in both Haliburton



Jeanette Gibbons and Rob Luke are among the retired health-care workers who have returned to work to help during the coronavirus pandemic. Gibbons, a retired nurse, and Luke, a retired paramedic, are screening patients for COVID-19 symptoms as they arrive at Minden Hospital./Photo submitted

and Minden sites."

Though her family wasn't initially pleased with Gibbons, who is almost 70, returning to work during a global pandemic, she said that after speaking with HHHS human resources, addressing concerns and being able to choose the length of her shift, she was pleased to be back "in the middle of it all."

"You know, we go out and we go to the supermarket even though we limit it," she said. "I felt far more protected in this job than I may be even going to the supermarket."

Gibbons said she is well-clad in goggles or glasses, mask and gown, is behind plexiglass, and keeps a distance from incoming patients as she asks them the screening questions related to their visit and symptoms. Visiting patients are asked to use sanitizer, and are offered a mask, at which point Gibbons takes their temperature.

"As I go up, I'm completely clad so I don't really worry about what I'm going up to," she said.

She then gives her assessment to the attending nurse – a different process is undertaken with those who are immediately presenting with known symptoms of COVID-19, but still one in which Gibbons feels protected.

"And I thought, you know what, it's good for me because otherwise I'd be home, watching this stuff all day instead of doing something," she said. "It would lead to a lot of inactivity. I mean, really, going out for walks and so forth, even that's frowned on unless you're certainly not near other people."

Gibbons said seeing news reports of others who have returned to help throughout the province – including an 85-year-old nurse – has been inspiring.

"So I thought, you know what, it'd be really great to see everyone again, it'll give me a boost, emotionally, mentally and physically to be able to feel like I'm helping, and reconnect – they were my coworkers for many many years," she said. "I'm meeting new people, and I'm seeing old patients that I've known forever."

Gibbons is humble – noting that the front line workers deserve much credit for the work they are doing – and feels she has gained much personally from the experience.

"I'm finding it very rejuvenating for me," she said. "I'm enjoying it. And I don't feel that I've got so much responsibility that my

nursing has to be on the top of it, but my background has enabled me to see patients, when I'm talking to patients, pick up other things that I've had to be aware of in the past. That first assessment, that first look, and what you see, can tell a lot. I think it's really good for me. It's another boost for me at this stage of my life, that I feel I'm back in the workforce a bit for a short period of time or however long it needs to be, and I think it's been very positive for me and I've been able to help out at the same time."

Rob Luke was a paramedic in this area, and in Lindsay, for a total of about 30 years beginning in the '70s. He started out as a small engine mechanic and marine mechanic, but then at age 27 decided he needed a change, which led to him going back to school to become a paramedic.

"And from then on it's just been a ride," he said.

Luke retired in 2001.

"I've been working around with different things, more or less retired about four times now," said Luke, who described himself as having a Type A personality. "I've got a bee in my bonnet, so I can't sit for very long. I have to do something, and it might as well be something constructive, so that's where we're at right now."

Luke said as he kept up on the news, he saw that the reach of the coronavirus was spreading toward Ontario.

"As time went on, I started hearing about some of the nursing homes [throughout the province], some of the problems they were having, the fact that they were short-staffed," said Luke. "... And our front line people right now, they're up to it. They've done a hell of a job. So it's only behooving on my part to say, OK, if you need my help, I'm here, here's my number, give me a call, I'll see what I can do. That's basically what it came down to."

Through HHHS, Luke became a screener at Minden hospital, but like Gibbons, he said he's only one of many doing what they can to help.

"There's people out there that are just normal everyday people that are standing in for screening. They don't have the knowledge that maybe some of us old people have, but they're still standing up and saying, oh, I'll do that, I'll deliver this, I'll take that there, I'll go out here and do this. There's lots of

good heroes out there. There's always that extra pair of hands that you need. There's always somebody that can drive somebody or drive equipment places."

And like Gibbons, he was quick to herald the efforts of the front line medical staff, noting that he feels safe after having been given "good equipment, good information." Staff working in clinical areas are masked for the duration of their shift, with access to full PPE when required. They're actively screened, with temperatures taken, at beginning and end of shift, and are provided scrubs for each shift, which are laundered internally.

"I'm just doing screening, that's all I do, and that's it," he said. "I'm just there to make sure the staff that are doing the job have the time to do the job properly without having to run out and do screening and then come back in and run back and forth. All I'm there to do is, safety valve, taking some of the heat off, that's it. Nothing fantastic. Just help."

Luke notes the need for people to understand simple efforts like physical distancing, washing hands and recommendations from public health officials.

"It's the simple things, the small things that are going to make all the difference in the world," he said. "Staying at home when you need to be staying at home, washing your hands, keeping your distance and all these small things. They all add up. They're just giving us a break until we find out – until the scientists will find out – if they can make a good vaccine for this. And then from there on in, it's just going to be another one of those checks in history. OK, like polio, things like that, that have plagued us in the past, we've found a cure for that and we've kept on going. It's science and technology that right now is going to [come] to the forefront to abate this thing anyway, so all this distancing and everything else is buying us time and time is all we need."

The extra hands on deck are offering HHHS time to prepare for a possible surge of COVID-19 cases, and the hiring of additional support services staff is one initiative, alongside separating facilities for COVID and non-COVID-related needs, limiting multiple work sites for staff and expanding hospital acute care unit offerings that has enabled the local health-care team to feel more prepared for what could come.

"Health human resources in a rural community has always been a challenge but the increased demand due to our facility separations and not allowing for cross-overs between sites has certainly put a great demand on us organizationally," said MacLaren. "We are planning in preparation for the COVID surge – and luckily have not been hit by it heavily at this time. However, we need to be prepared."

The answer to how many extra hires the health team needs is unknown at this time.

"I think that is the biggest challenge for us right now, there is much that is unknown," said MacLaren. "We would like to have a robust staff complement to support our COVID response. We have to plan for many potentialities, including staff illness, that will have an impact on our available human resources both in hospital, LTC, and our community programs, so we will continue recruiting."

Though Gibbons and Luke are humble in their efforts to help, MacLaren said people stepping up now have answered the call to serve.

"The dedication and commitment to patient care that we see across the organization with our health-care providers is reflected in the sentiments of our new hires," said MacLaren. "This is a calling for them – being of service to their community in a time of need resonates very deeply for them."

Stop the Spread

COVID-19 can be deadly.
Stay home. Save lives.



EORN issues RFP for massive cell project

by CHAD INGRAM
Times Staff

The Eastern Ontario Regional Network is releasing the first request for proposals in its massive cell gap project that will connect areas of eastern Ontario with low or no connectivity with mobile broadband internet.

The \$213-million project includes \$71 million in funding from each of the federal and provincial governments, and \$10 million in funding from the member municipalities of the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus, which owns EORN, and which includes Haliburton County. The County of Haliburton will contribute up to \$565,000 to the project, and the remaining \$61 million is to be funded by mobile service providers. The project will entail the construction of new communications towers throughout the region, and it's expected will take three to four years to complete.

"This is the first big step in extending connectivity to our region," Minden Hills Mayor Brent Devolin, who sits on the EORN board, wrote in a social media post. "Will keep you posted when the RFPs come in and how and when it will improve service to our county. Thanks to all the municipalities and the county government in never wavering funding to make this next step a reality."

Mike Rutter is the chief administrative officer for the County of Haliburton, and one of the project's co-leads.

"As a CAO co-lead, I can't put into words how excited I am that we have reached this important milestone," Rutter said in an email to the *Times*. "Over the last few years I have been able to witness first-hand the incredible commitment and dedication of the EORN

staff team and board. There were many times that the challenges seemed almost insurmountable, but they worked together to find creative solutions that kept the project moving forward. The last couple of months have accentuated the need for enhanced connectivity in the county and region as it is so critical to ensure continuity of business and the health and safety of our residents. This project will address the cellular connectivity challenges, but we also know our work in traditional broadband is not finished. There has been a great deal of analysis done already, and we look forward to working with all levels of government to implement solutions that provide internet speeds and reliability that meet the needs of our residents."

Rutter thanked members of county council for their support of the project, particularly in lobbying for funding from the upper levels of government. It took a couple of years to get funding commitments from both the provincial and federal government.

"They have supported EORN and the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus in every way possible as this project was developed," he wrote. "I know they were tireless advocates, and rarely had a conversation with our MPP and MP that did not include a question about the status of our funding request."

Rutter said the RFP will be on the market for a period of four months, that the review of the submissions was expected to take about the same length of time, and that it was hoped construction on the project could begin in early 2021.

According to a press release from EORN, 40 per cent of the area it serves does not have access to speeds fast enough to allow the streaming of HD video; 20 per cent does not

have access to standard definition video, typical mobile app use or video app calling; and 10 per cent has no voice calling service at all.

"The gaps are the result of market failure," the release reads. "Rural areas don't generate enough revenue for mobile carriers to build adequate services. The CRTC recently designated both mobile and fixed broadband as basic services for all Canadians. The public-private partnership will reduce carriers' infrastructure costs, creating a stronger busi-

ness case to improve services and meet the CRTC's basic services goals."

"This project will take a number of years to complete, but that's why we're working with our federal and municipal partners today, to solicit proposals from service providers to improve cellular connectivity for those families and businesses in the future," Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock MPP and Ontario Infrastructure Minister Laurie Scott said in the release.



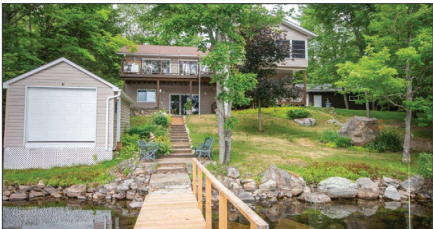
Canoe FM Bingo funds food banks

Joanne Barnes, left, and Marilynne Lesperance of the Minden Community Food Centre sort the food that was purchased with \$8,000 donated from Canoe FM, which the volunteer radio station earned through its weekly Bingo games. The money was used to buy food to help stock all of the county's food banks, with the food distributed through the centre on Minden's Newcastle Street. /CHAD INGRAM Staff

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Volunteer Week



Volunteers step up when community needs them most

by JENN WATT
Editor

The work of volunteers is the keystone of the Haliburton Highlands community, with hundreds if not thousands of residents putting the needs of their neighbours first, doing what they can to make the Highlands a better place. This week is National Volunteer Week, a time set aside to thank volunteers for what they do all year round.

This year, the *Haliburton Echo* and *Minden Times* reached out to the county's mayors, asking them to share their perspectives on what makes volunteers so important.

"The number of volunteers we have in Algonquin Highlands, and their commitment to making things better, never ceases to amaze me," said Carol Moffatt, mayor of Algonquin Highlands.

"The folks who step up to be on our various committees of council bring a broad range of knowledge and experience to develop new ideas, solve problems, put on events and look after the well-being of a wide range of community interests and needs. The dedication in the number of hours some of these people put in for the township and the community is astounding. There are so many things we simply couldn't do if we didn't have volunteers."

She also thanked those who better the community through clubs and groups that are not municipally-affiliated such as Dorset Lions Club; the Stanhope tennis group; and the Oxtongue Lake for Arts and Culture group; as well as those who step up to do things like teach courses, lead fitness classes, run pickleball and organize speakers.

In Minden Hills, Mayor Brent Devolin said the volunteers are too many to name, saying their work is crucial to the well-being of the municipality.

"We can never begin to pay for the support they give us. In good times and bad they're there and they help out. I just think of those larger groups that support our community. Those who regularly participate in our committees, working groups, task forces, and events. They're there all the time. Within Minden Hills, the numbers are in the hundreds, if not the thousands on an annual basis. We have a lot to thank them for," he said.

While some rural areas are seeing a drain on their volunteer populations, Haliburton County benefits from a robust group

see page 12



Minden Rotary Club member Sally Moore greets guest Max Brosseau as he inquires about purchasing tickets at the annual Minden Rotary Dinner and Auction last June. /VANESSA BALINTEC Staff

CANOE
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A special thanks to all the volunteers and staff
who are working to help our community during
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**Together you are improving the lives of
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This ad has been purchased personally by VDO Board Members



Volunteer Week



from page 11

including many energetic retirees. “We continually are getting new people who have moved to the area who are done their working career to come here with experience and energy. We haven’t had that [decline] even in normal times, that decline we’ve seen elsewhere in other rural communities,” he said.

Dysart et al Mayor Andrea Roberts agreed with Devolin, pointing out what a wealth of experience retirees bring to the county.

“Many people retire up here and they bring their skills, expertise, and energy,” she said. “Because of this our community is better off. There has been no other time where the importance of volunteers has been shown as during this COVID-19 pandemic. People are reaching out like never before, delivering groceries, donating to food banks and other organizations and rallying to fill the demands that our more vulnerable people in the community have.”

As Roberts pointed out, the pandemic has put into stark relief the importance of the helpers in the community, as many struggle with new financial hardships, anxiety over the virus and uncertainty for the future.

The efforts to bring people together has made the community stronger, Highlands East Mayor Dave Burton said.

“Local businesses, agencies and individuals have come forward to help our most vulnerable population and those in need. I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the CFN [Central Food Network] and Wilberforce Foodland for the implementa-



Volunteer Dental Outreach Clinic volunteers Brigitte Gebauer, left, and Lisa Kerr staff their booth at St. George's Anglican Church pancake supper held at the Legion last year. The VDO was the chosen recipient of that year's fundraiser. /JENN WATT Staff

tion of a grocery delivery service during this unfortunate situation. I am so proud of their efforts to come together and provide this service during this crisis to ensure our community continues to have access to essential supplies,” he said.

All of the mayors have expressed their appreciation for the frontline workers who have responded to the challenge of COVID-19

and are working to keep the people of the Highlands safe.

Devolin said that when the pandemic is over, the list of those to thank will take a week to compile. “Everybody has stepped up,” he said. “...I think it’s wonderful and it’s humbling to have that support in our community.”

That support endures throughout the year,

with volunteers continually doing what they can to create new and better things to benefit the greater good.

In Algonquin Highlands, work in Dorset to promote health care has been particularly impressive, said Moffatt.

“In terms of notable achievements, the vol-

see page 13

Thank You To Our Volunteers!!!

Together we are making a difference in Haliburton County

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- Community Cooks
- Cardiff Food Bank
- Heat Bank Haliburton County

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Thank you for all your support over the years.
We could not do this without you!

SIRCH
community services

"No one can do everything, but everyone can do something and together we can change the world" [Ronald J. Sider]



Volunteer Week



from page 12

unteerism and achievements of the Dorset Health Hub is surely one of the most impressive mobilizations of community goodness I've ever seen; and there's practically an army behind the planning and execution of the 30-year-old Dorset Snowball," she said. "The restoration of the Hawk Lake Log Chute is also a favourite in terms of stand-outs ... but I'm a bit biased there!" (Moffatt

was heavily involved with the log chute project prior to her time in politics.)

In Highlands East, the benefits of volunteers manifests in many ways, Burton said, from the firefighters who give their time and energy to keep people safe to the Central Food Network and Wilberforce Curling Club that provide educational programming to local youth to the beautification and community events created and hosted by volunteers to those who give their time to municipal

committees.

Moffatt, Devolin, Burton and Roberts all said they were deeply grateful for what the volunteers add to their communities.

"They shine brightest in times like this, but they shine for us all the time and if you're out and about very much in the community at any of these events or at any of these initiatives you see their faces. It's wonderful to see them. You couldn't begin to name them all. We're very fortunate the community we live in," Devolin said.

"There are many quotes that acknowledge volunteers but ultimately, it's simply thank you – thank you for caring, for committing and for creating. I'm grateful that so many wonderful people call Algonquin Highlands their home and I'm equally thankful they

choose to share their energy, skill – and tenacity, to take on what they do," said Moffatt.

"Thank you to all the volunteers! You are appreciated more than words can say!" said Roberts.

"To all of our caring and compassionate volunteers who have dedicated their time and talents to make Highlands East a better place for all thank you for all that you do and continue to do. This is a time to recognize and celebrate volunteerism in our community and thank the many volunteers who selflessly donate their time and energy throughout the year. Our community is better for it and we are so fortunate to have such noble people in our community, who want to create and achieve good things," Burton said.



Volunteer Ben Scott shows students from Wilberforce Elementary School how to measure butter during the Let's Cook program offered last year at the Lloyd Watson Centre. The program was sponsored by the Central Food Network and Highlands East Food Hub and involved the Community Cooks. /DARREN LUM Staff

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**WE APPLAUD VOLUNTEERS
FOR ALL THEY DO**



**NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK
APRIL 19-25 2020**

The Township of Minden Hills would like to express their appreciation to all of the volunteers within the community who have contributed their time and energy in supporting our annual special events, lending a hand at our Cultural Centre, sharing concerns and ideas on our advisory committees, keeping youth and seniors active through a variety of programming and so much more!

thank you



*HHHS would like to applaud
our amazing volunteers*

**During National
Volunteer Week
we reflect and thank
HHHS volunteers for their
endless efforts and
ongoing support.**

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are a true blessing.
You make a world of
difference in all
that you do.**



**HALIBURTON HIGHLANDS
HEALTH SERVICES**

Leaders in Innovative Rural Health Care

Archie Stouffer Elementary School Learn@Home program

Mr. Buchanan's 5/6 class

This was part of Beth's online journal using Classdojo.com. Students in Mr. Buchanan's 5/6 class are encouraged to share thoughts on anything they want while we are learning@home.

Dear Mr B,

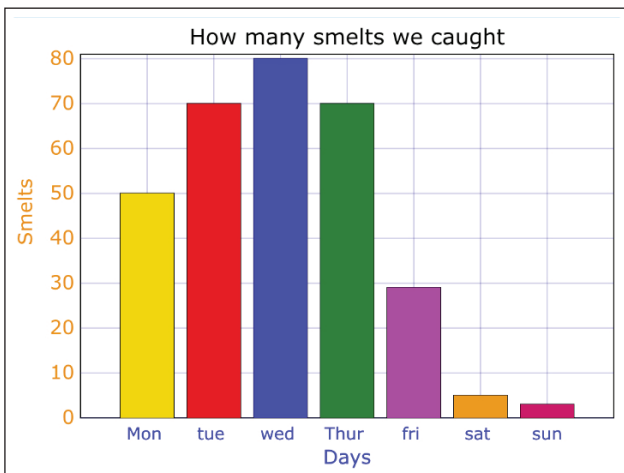
Hello. How are you doing? I am having fun up in Timmins, but it is getting boring not going to school. How about you, are your kids bored?

I miss my friends, and the best teacher in the world. I wish we all had to do our grades again. It would really help the kids who struggle in school.

You may not agree with me and that is OK because we are allowed our own opinions. I have an opinion that the government kinda got lucky because they wanted online schooling, and here we are doing online schooling.

I feel like once the covid-19 stuff is over they won't worry about the money till summer. That is what I think. What do you think?

From Beth Allin, Grade 6
5/6 Mr. Buchanan, ASES



McLean Rowden created a graph and added it to his math assignment. This was handed in as part of McLean's math assignment on data management. He decided to complete an online graph of his fishing trips and submit it through Google Classroom. While this was not part of the assignment, it showed relevant learning can happen anywhere and anytime.

W1: Writing

We have all had to do things a lot differently these days. Thanks to a global pandemic, everyday procedures have changed.

Write instructions to accomplish a simple daily task successfully.

Write your Procedure in the box. Remember to check your spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Making grilled cheese it's quite easy, and is made a lot in my house because of this quarantine and it's the easiest thing to make.

1. First grab 2 slices of bread, then grab your butter and give the bread a thin coat of butter only on one side.
 2. Next set your fryer to 5 - 6.
 3. Grab your pan and butter again and butter the pan so the grilled cheese does not stick.
 4. Put the pan on the fryer and put the butter side down on the pan, grab some cheese and put it on the bread, then put the other piece of bread butter side up on the cheese.
 5. Grab the lid for your pan and put it on the pan.
 6. Grill the grilled cheese for about 2 minutes then check it, if it is a golden brown it is ready to flip, cook the other side for at least 1 minute because the pan is hotter and doesn't take as long to cook on the other side.
 7. Like the other side if it is a golden brown it is ready to serve.
- ENJOY!

By: Sophie Graham, Grade 5
5/6 Mr. Buchanan, ASES

Ms. Shantz's Grade 1B class

These photos are from 1B Ms. Shantz's class, fondly known as "The 1B's Knees."



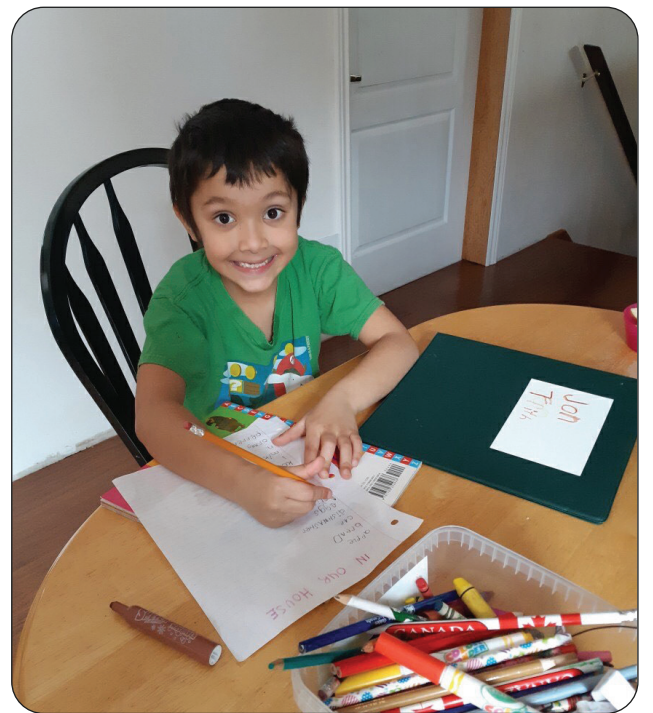
Keetyn Mills does a math scavenger hunt "There are so many pine cones to count."



Faith Taylor does her work on the computer.



Alfie Thompson does his homework, and keeps his sisters entertained.



Jonathan Frith makes a list of groceries.



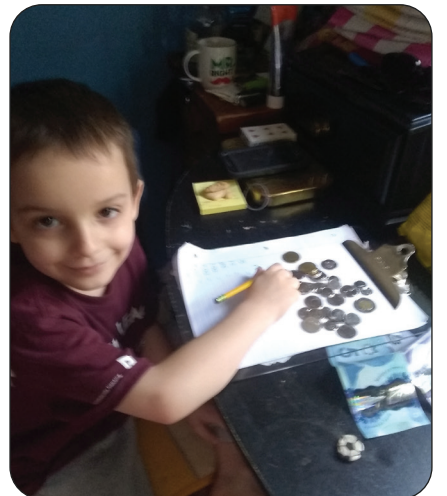
Orchid Germuska shows a snowman creation.



Hayden Spears does a colouring activity.



Hannah Johnson reads the daily story posted to her Google Classroom.



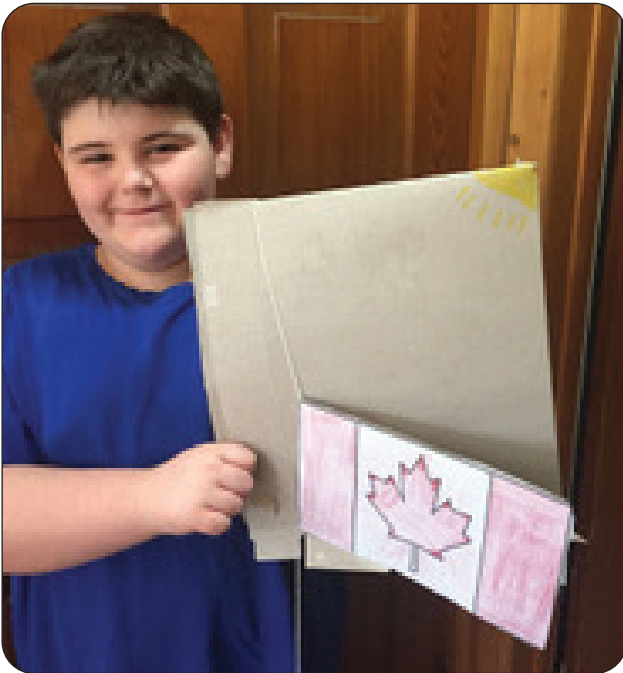
Gideon Byford counts and sorts money (one of the math tasks for last week).



Archie Stouffer Elementary School Learn@Home program

Mrs. Iles's 4A class

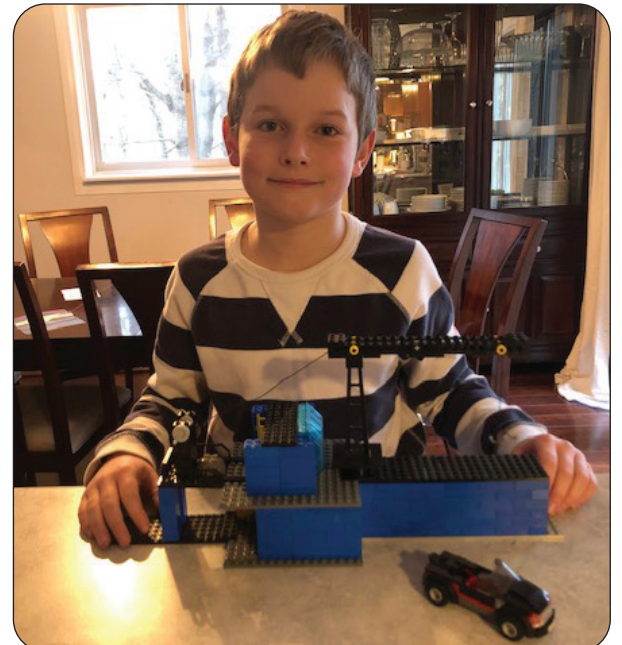
Students in Mrs. Iles's 4A class show their pulleys and gears creations they made at home. After learning about pulleys and gears at school, the students were asked to find and collect things from their home or outside to make a machine that uses pulleys or gears to do a job. The students will also be writing about them and testing them.



Matthew Fairey holds up his flagpole creation.



Sophia Collins made this pulley using a can of peaches.



Van Ryan shows his Lego creation.

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Future unknown for youth during pandemic

Students' stress grows over school, rent, summer jobs

by SUE TIFFIN
Times Staff

Abby Gordon was sitting in a class, studying in the last month of school in her first year of the developmental service program at Algonquin College in Ottawa, when everything changed. As the coronavirus spread into Ontario, so was news that nearby universities were planning closures for two weeks, or for the rest of the school year, initiating online classes to keep students home.

"I was actually in class when one of my teachers was talking to us about it and she was saying she didn't think the school would get cancelled, and if it did get cancelled it would only be two weeks, that it wasn't that serious and we had nothing to worry about," said Gordon. "By the end of that class – it's a two hour class and she was talking about it at the beginning – by the end of that class, everything was cancelled."

As soon as Gordon got the email noting that classes would be moving online, she finished the class, packed everything up and came straight home to Minden without stopping along the way.

"It was a big change in a very small period of time," she said.

That change meant the cancellation of her placement, and that her classes moved online,

which created challenges for Gordon, who is a visual learner.

"That's not my ideal way of learning at all, I always get very good marks and honours and I'm not saying I'm getting bad marks now but it's a lot harder to do it online," she said. "Even to ask questions of your teachers, you have to email them, you can't talk to them face-to-face and ask questions in class, and then you have to wait for their response before you can continue the lesson. It's a big change."

Gordon said the switch to online classes resulted in more assignments and quizzes so that teachers could assess students, which came as added stress for many students who were in the middle of moving home and sorting out accommodations and part-time jobs. Additionally, access to internet throughout the province is not equal.

"I live in the Blairhampton [area] so my wi-fi is not that good because it's in the middle of the forest, so even with bad wi-fi, it brought a lot of stress and made everything completely different," said Gordon.

While many students have struggled to keep summer jobs as businesses across the province closed, adding stress to those needing to pay for school and accommodation in the fall, Gordon is fortunate to have secured a job working as a screener at the Minden hospital, but still has to pay hundreds of dollars of monthly rent on the townhouse in Ottawa she



Abby Gordon, whose school year was cut short due to the spread of the coronavirus in Ottawa, is working as a screener at Minden hospital and wondering what her future holds./ Submitted photo

lives in during the school year because it isn't safe to sublet it to others.

At 20, she said the summer will look different – weddings and baby showers are being cancelled, her 21st birthday at the end of this month won't go as planned, and said she understands the grief of high school students.

"The students that have been going through high school for the last four years and so excited for this day, it's now cancelled. And it's devastating because they've been working so hard for that entire time and now it's just been taken away. It's nobody's fault, but it's

super frustrating when that happens."

For this generation facing their first major historic event, there is much worry of an unstable future.

"On the news, it said this could last 18 months to two years, and I'm like, well, what am I going to do? I'm supposed to go back to school next year and graduate next year, and now that might not be happening, so I have no idea what my future holds anymore because it all just got so disrupted so fast."

Gordon said she continues to see some friends not taking the pandemic seriously, noting that social media tools allow her to see a user's location.

"I still see to this day people hanging out and I don't understand because it's a rule," said Gordon. "You're not supposed to hang out other than with your family members you're obviously living with, but so many students are still seeing each other, hanging out with their friends, or going for a drive in their car, and I'm like – that's not six feet."

Gordon's mom is a nurse, her dad is a volunteer firefighter and her sister is a paramedic, and she said having a family that works on the front line makes her extra aware of the threat of the virus.

"I just want everybody to take it seriously and understand that once we all comply to the rules, this will end a lot faster," said Gordon. "But if we don't comply, it's going to be going on forever – we're going to lose our summer, we're going to lose our next year of school. You have to play by the rules if you want something to come out of this. This can end a lot of faster. We can end it. We're capable of ending it. But we have to do what they're telling us to do to end it."

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Level: Intermediate

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers on page 16

Put on your jeans

THERE WAS A social media post the other day that said "I'm putting my jeans on today." There were a ton of comments that followed. Many asked: Why? The answer was that there was grocery shopping to be done and sweatpants weren't an option.

We've been in this lockdown for long enough that for some (many) of us the extra pounds have settled nicely in places we don't want them to. Getting on the scale is one way to look directly in the face of the truth. A better measurement is putting on clothing and seeing how it fits. Perhaps it's a shirt that gapes where it shouldn't or a pair of pants that can barely be done up. I prefer this method because it is more accurate, and not as demoralizing. When I say more accurate I mean that the scale measures everything. For people who exercise during weight loss programs the number on the scale either doesn't change or doesn't change much because they are building muscle. A pound of muscle is denser and therefore takes up less space than a pound of fat. That means the gape in your shirt will lessen before you see a decrease in the number between your toes.

We may or may not be getting closer to being "released" (how's that for a wishy-washy statement?). While there's not much we can do to replace the skillful hands of our hairstylists right now, we can work on shedding some of the extra weight we've gained before we get to see the in-person head-to-toe versions of our families, friends

and coworkers.

The first thing to do is to go to your closet and pull out an outfit that you don't want to try on. Next is a tough one but, try that outfit on. Assess the damage. If you can wear the outfit, start wearing it as often as you can. If you can't wear it then hang it some place that you'll see it many times throughout the day (near the fridge perhaps?). Be sure to try it on at least once a day.

The next step is to take action. That means cut back on your calories. Use every tool you have to do that.

Smaller portion sizes (use smaller bowls and plates). Restrict snacks. Make healthy choices. Track your calories. Put a security system on your kitchen. Get creative. Calories consumed that aren't used are stored in your body. It's time to do the math. Calories in need to equal calories out.

There are going to be enough challenges in our future. Let's take this time to get this one off the list.

One last point, jeans tend to have Lycra in them. That makes them stretchy. I think it's safe to say that jeans are the new sweatpants. When choosing the above mentioned outfit, avoid anything that stretches. You'll only be masking the truth.

Something to think about.

Laurie Sweig is a certified personal fitness trainer and spinning instructor. She owns and operates The Point for Fitness. She can be reached at laurie@thepointforfitness.com.



LAURIE SWEIG
Practical Fitness

OSSTF and government reach deal

by CHAD INGRAM
Times Staff

The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, along with the Ontario Public School Boards Association, OSSTF Education Workers and Council of Trustees' Associations, has reached a tentative three-year deal with the provincial government.

Teachers have been working without a contract since last summer, and while OSSTF job action, including rotating one-day strikes, had been ramping up throughout the winter, the COVID-19 crisis has meant that all publicly funded schools have been closed since the March break, the school year recently resuming with an online curriculum. The Ford government has said schools will remain closed past May 4, and it's unclear whether they will reopen before the end of the school year.

Previously, the government had backed down on plans to increase class sizes and some requirements for minimum amounts of e-learning, and while the details of the tentative agreement are to remain confidential until the deal is ratified, major media outlets are reporting the union agreed to the government's offer of a one per cent salary increase for each of the three years of the deal.

"Our priority has always been to reach good deals with teachers' and education workers' unions, that advance the

priorities of students and parents," Education Minister Stephen Lecce said in a statement on April 20. "That is exactly what we have done by reaching deals with every education union in this province. During this entire process, our aim was to ensure our young people receive the best education we can offer, so they can develop the skills they need to succeed in the classroom and in the jobs of the future."

OSSTF president Harvey Bischof acknowledged the ongoing COVID-19 crisis had contributed to the negotiations getting wrapped up. "These are extraordinary times," Bischof said in a press release. "When we began negotiations nearly a year ago, no one could have anticipated the situation we face today."

"While this tentative agreement does not satisfy all of our concerns, we recognize the current environment we are in and the need for students to have stability once this emergency is over," Bischof continued.

A statement from the OPSBA also acknowledged the role the COVID-19 crisis had played in negotiations.

"Despite the many operational challenges the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to the collective bargaining process, all of the parties continued to work towards reaching a deal that will help bring stability to our system during what is obviously a rapidly evolving situation," said OPSBA president Cathy Abraham in a press release. "Our secondary teachers and education workers will play a very important role in guiding our students through the challenging time ahead. This agreement is a recognition that we value the contribu-

“

When we began negotiations nearly a year ago, no one could have anticipated the situation we face today.

— OSSTF PRESIDENT HARVEY BISCHOF

”

Two Minden Hills residents charged with fraud

Two Minden Hills women are facing fraud charges following a months-long police investigation.

According to the Haliburton Highlands OPP, the manager at a local business contacted police on Dec. 14 after noting inconsistencies in financial documents.

A 39-year-old from Minden Hills was charged with 10 counts of fraud under \$5,000 and 10 counts of "use, deals, acts on forged documents." A 32-year-old from Minden Hills was charged with 21 counts of fraud under \$5,000 and 21 counts of making forged documents.

They are scheduled to appear in the Ontario Court of Justice in Minden on July 8.

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www.mindentimes.ca

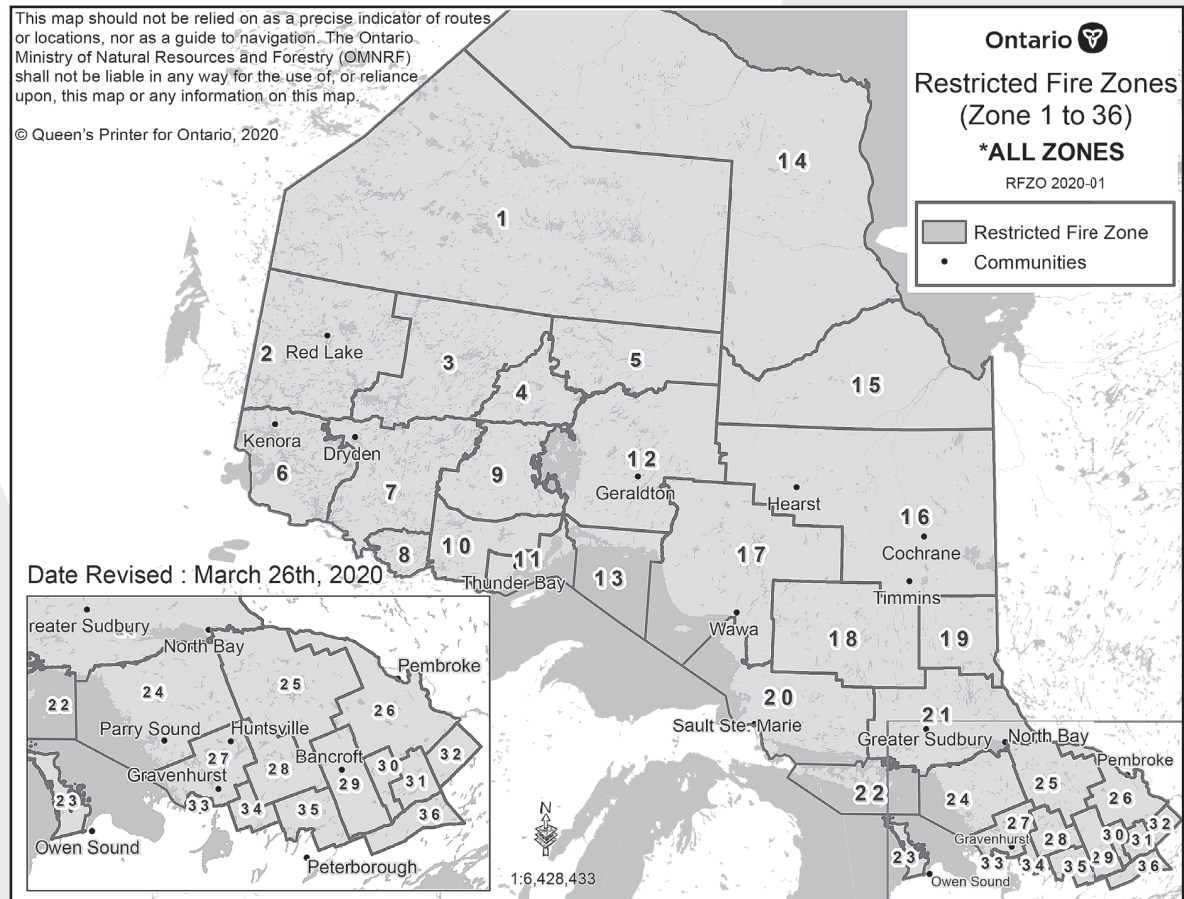
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RESTRICTED FIRE ZONE IN EFFECT

For all Zones in the fire region of Ontario

In order to ensure public safety and well-being during the evolving COVID-19 outbreak, Ontario has declared a Restricted Fire Zone for the entire fire region of the province (Restricted Fire Zones 1 to 36) outlined in the map below, effective April 3rd, 2020 at 12:01 a.m.



The Restricted Fire Zone is in effect until further notice. This is a proactive action to reduce the number of preventable human-caused fires and reduce the risk of wildfires impacting the public.

Restricted Fire Zones help protect public safety. In a Restricted Fire Zone, outdoor fires are banned. Portable gas stoves may still be used BUT must be handled with extreme care. For more information, contact your local Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) Fire Management Headquarters.

For detailed information on the Restricted Fire Zone boundaries visit: [Ontario.ca/forestfire](https://ontario.ca/forestfire).



At NFTC, the health and welfare of our community, and our family of employees is of the utmost importance. During these uncertain times, our team remains committed to our customers."

– Grant Roughley,
VICE PRESIDENT

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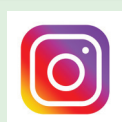
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Watson General Contracting is hiring F/T and P/T employees for landfill positions. Areas hiring Minden Hills Dysart and Algonquin Highlands. Email **watsongeneralcontracting@sympatico.ca** or call **Michelle Watson 705 854-1382** We would like to thank our essential workers for their dedicated service. Please know that they are here for you even during these difficult times. These hardworking individuals appreciate your respect and appreciation.

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In Loving Memory of
Marion Sedgwick

Anna Marion Sedgwick of Gelert died April 13, 2020, at the age of 90.

Marion was a teacher, nurse, nursing teacher, missionary, United Church of Canada diaconal minister, world traveller and gardener. She was born in Gelert Aug. 10, 1929, to John Barr and Mary (Allen) Sedgwick. She was predeceased by her brothers, Rowland Sedgwick (the late Edna) and the Rev. Wendell Sedgwick; her sister, Genevieve Payne; and her niece Joan Bertin. She is survived by brother-in-law Philip Payne and sister-in-law Lorna (Keay) Sedgwick. Marion is warmly remembered by her nieces and nephews Sonya (Sedgwick) Proctor (late Mike), Katherine Sedgwick (Raymond Brassard), Melanie Sedgwick, John Sedgwick, Kenneth Sedgwick, Megan Payne (Jeff Payne), Bruce Payne (Jennifer Ackert), Nancy Payne (Denis Grignon), Valerie Payne (Scott Iverson), and niece Joan's husband Joe Bertin. Aunt Marion is also remembered fondly by great-nieces and great-nephews Nikita and Conor Payne, Esmé and Christian Iverson, Madeline and Sydney Payne, Yannick and Jonah Grignon, Nathan, Daniel, Emmet and Timothy Wisnicki, Sam and Tom Sedgwick, and Julia and Claire Sedgwick. Marion had friends all over the world.

Cremation has taken place; a memorial service will be held when we are able to gather once again for worship. If you would like to do something in Marion's memory in the meantime, you could plant a tree or a patch of garden. Gifts to honour her remarkable life may be made to the Mission and Service Fund of the United Church of Canada and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden K0M 2K0

www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com

In Loving Memory of
Frederick Thomas Coleman

Fred Coleman passed away peacefully at the Ross Memorial Hospital Lindsay, Friday, April 17th, 2020 at the age of 91.

Devoted husband to the late Elsie (nee Enberg) Coleman (2007). Loyal father to Diane (Brian) Rushlow, Tom (Yuying), Peter (Jeab), Ted, and Stan. Brother to Muriel (Gordon) McCullough, and the late Walter "Duke" Coleman. Cherished Grandpa to Michelle (Steve), Valerie, Andrew, Christopher (Amanda), Conrad, Danny (Mary Kate), Lena, Jonathan, and Justin. Great-grandfather to Alexandria, Mason, and Barrett.

In his high school days in Montreal, Fred was a star paddler and scholar. He worked at Unilever as account manager and human resources specialist for 30 years before retiring as a Florida snowbird in 1991. Fred's wit and steadfast character will be forever remembered by his family and friends.

A private family funeral service will be held at the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd 127 Bobcaygeon Road, P.O. Box 427, Minden K0M 2K0 on Wednesday April 22, 2020 "Zoom" access to the service is available for friends and extended family at 2 pm. Interment at the Minden Cemetery.

Memorial donations to the Ontario SPCA can be made via the Monk Funeral Home website.

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LOOK INSIDE



Wanted: toonies

Minden students are looking for toonies to help people with autism.

See page 3



New job

Bill Lambie takes on a new position with the District Health Council.

See page 5



Pancakes popular

They lined up for pancakes at a fundraiser in Stanhope.

See page 14



Bunny tales

Jenna Hamilton really got into the Easter spirit during a Minden egg hunt.

See page 15

In Quotes

"The fishermen ... chose not to dispose of their waste and unwanted materials in a proper manner."

Brenda Wilcox and Steve Walker, page 9.



Rite of spring

As soon as the snow melts and the sidewalks become bare, there's nothing like being able to take out your skipping rope. That's exactly what Haley Moore, Haley Acorn, Laura Taylor and Joanna Arthur did during recess at Archie Stouffer Elementary School on Wednesday when the temperatures soared to 11 degrees.

Chief gets tough

by JERRY GROZELLE
Times staff

The Minden Fire Department is about to get tough on people who violate the Minden Hills Outdoor Burning by-law.

Fire Chief Doug Schell said the time for warnings is past.

The by-law specifically states how, where and when burning may be carried out and what precautions must be taken to ensure it is done safely.

"A call to an uncontrolled burn can be expensive," Schell said. "Last year it cost a guy \$1,200 for a fire that took firefighters an hour and a half to extinguish."

He noted that if the Ministry of Natural Resources water bombers are called in, costs

see HOUR page 3

Cop costs on the rise

by IZABELA JAROSZYNSKI
Times staff

Rising policing costs are causing ripples in the Minden Hills and Dysart budgets.

For Minden Hills, the projected cost for Ontario Provincial Police services is \$778,900, an 8.3 per cent increase over last year's estimated figure.

For Dysart, the number is slightly higher at \$805,732, with a 12.5 per cent rise.

At press time, the figures for Algonquin Highlands and Highlands East had not yet been presented at council.

At their respective meetings last week, councillors from Minden Hills and Dysart seemed surprised at the increase.

see COUNCILLORS page 2

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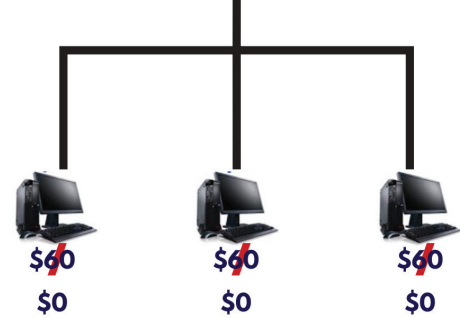
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